

# International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy



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of EDINBURGH

## Purpose of Policy

The University is a sponsor of international students within the UK immigration system and is required to evidence their attendance and engagement. Formerly known as 'Tier 4' students, due to their visa type, international students requiring a visa are now referred to as 'sponsored' students. In this context 'sponsorship' does not refer to whether students are, or are not, supported financially by the University. The University is required to demonstrate that sponsored students are attending and engaging in their programme of study and that there are active procedures in place to identify and address attendance/engagement patterns of concern.

The policy also supports the improvement of the overall student experience by identifying where students may be experiencing difficulties and ensuring timely intervention and appropriate support. This policy outlines how the University will do this.

## Overview

As a sponsor of international students within the UK immigration system, the University is required to evidence robust process and systems that demonstrate oversight of sponsored students' attendance and engagement with their programme of study.

The University is subject to audit visits and data requests by UK Home Office Visas and Immigration officials. If the Home Office were to conclude that attendance and engagement monitoring was not being implemented as required, the University may face either a suspension or revocation of its Home Office Student sponsor licence and Highly Trusted Sponsor Status. Aside from the significant financial and reputational damage this could cause, it would place the immigration status of all sponsored students at the University of Edinburgh at risk and would also likely impact upon all sponsored skilled workers working at the University. One of the key areas used to assess sponsor performance is management of student attendance and engagement.

UK Visa and Immigration sponsor duties relating to this area are detailed in the Student sponsor guidance in the following documents:

- 1) Applying for or renewing a Student sponsor licence.
- 2) Sponsorship duties
- 3) Student sponsor compliance
- 4) Higher education regulatory reform

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-sponsor-guidance>

## Scope: Mandatory Policy

This policy applies to **all** sponsored international students attending the University of Edinburgh. The policy applies to on-campus students, those who are registered as writing up their thesis, and those students who are on "study away" from the University or are on "Leave of Absence".

The policy will be implemented by School Administrators/Directors of Professional Services across the University and Student Administration, and supported by Colleges and Student Systems and Administration, including the Student Immigration Service.

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## Document control

Dates	Approved:	Starts:	Equality impact assessment:	Amendments:	Next Review:
	31.07.17	01.08.17	TBC	20.08.21 31.07.23	2022/23
Approving authority	Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)				
Consultation undertaken	Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) and representatives from Colleges, Schools and Support Units.				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Student Immigration Service				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	United Kingdom immigration rules and related statutory instruments and secondary legislation Student sponsor guidance Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students				
UK Quality Code	Not applicable				
Policies superseded by this policy	Version of this policy dated 31.07.17				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email <a href="mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk">Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk</a> or telephone 0131 650 2138.				
Keywords	Sponsored Students, International, Tier 4, attendance, engagement				

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1. Schools or Colleges are responsible for maintaining records in relation to this policy for all sponsored students on each of their programmes.

2. The Student Immigration Service is responsible for developing guidance, setting out the procedures Schools will adopt to implement this policy, and for subsequently overseeing Schools' implementation. The Student Immigration Service is overseen by the Home Office Advisory Group (HOAG).

<https://www.edweb.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/immigration/tier-4-staff/student-attendance-and-engagement-monitoring>

3. Each School is responsible for developing an annual School Engagement Monitoring Plan. The plan:

- a) Sets out a School specific framework under which engagement and attendance requirements will be met.
- b) Identifies those responsible for the monitoring of all engagement data at a School level.
- c) Sets out roles and responsibilities for uploading any engagement data.

4. Schools are required to monitor and record a student's meaningful engagement with their studies. Engagement should be spread evenly throughout the academic year for each year of study and should incorporate a variety of types of academic engagement.

5. Schools are required to use EUCLID to record the engagement and any escalation records of individual students and to demonstrate that engagement is being recorded for students and that non-engagement is recorded, noted and acted upon.

6. Schools are required to review the data collected and recorded on a regular basis for the students for whom they have oversight and responsibility. The Student Immigration Service will provide guidance to Schools and Deaneries on the frequency with which data should be reviewed.

7. These reviews will determine whether and what action Schools need to take in line with the four-stage escalation process articulated in the Student Immigration Service guidance.

8. The Student Immigration Service, on behalf of the University, is required to report to the Home Office any sponsored student whose lack of attendance or engagement with their studies or lack of academic progress has resulted in their exclusion, thereby cancelling the University's education sponsorship for the student to be in the UK. This report must be made within 10 working days of the student record being updated to reflect the exclusion.

## **Student responsibilities**

9. Students with a Student visa must ensure they have obtained the appropriate visa for studying in the UK in advance of enrolling at the University of Edinburgh.

10. Student visa holders are expected to be in attendance on their chosen programme and actively engaged with it, as required by relevant Degree Regulations (<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk>), Degree Programme Tables and programme handbooks. If there are any concerns regarding this, students should approach their Supervisor, Student Advisor or Student Immigration Service.

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11. Students with a Student visa must ensure the University holds their most up to date contact details on the student record. This can be updated via MyEd.

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